The Washington Merry-Go-Round

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By Drew Pearson

Propaganda Bailoons

President Truman's relations For instance, when this colwith reporters at the White umnist last spring urged send-

House are at an all-time low. ing propaganda balloons behind The boys in the White House the Iron Curtain, it was frowned press room, on by military advisors and by some State Department officials. They feared a violent action in Moscow. But when the crusade for free-

dom was able to float balloons into Czechoslovakia and Poland, the freedom leaflets were mimeographed, tacked on telephone poles, mailed anonymously to Communist officials, and created such a furor that Communist newspapers, the Czech Prime Minister and Radio Moscow had to go into high gear to reply.

ing simple questions at the Public opinion became so riled White House news conferences inside Czechoslovakia that the It didn't, get into the news Communists actually began look-papers, by Mr. Truman, who re-ing for some way to free Associturned from Key West tired and ated Press Correspondent Wil-

for not emphasizing that the list or propaganda projects have of war prisoners put out by the been urged for Hungary and Chinese Communists was un other satellite countries, an of-verified and thus probably inac ficial wall of discouragement curate—something, incidentally, has been erected by the Pentathat all reporters already had gon and by some of the more timid souls in the State Depart-

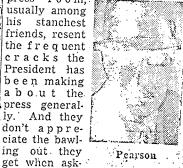
out for leaking the story that The reason is partly illus-Judge Tom Murphy of New York trated by a story told by Gen. had turned down the job of chief Bedell Smith, expert head of graft investigator. However, the Central Intelligence, ho represents press officers, led by counts a conversation are station.

Stalin was asked.
"Yes," replied Stalin, "but not

of American policy toward Rus- that the law of the jungle remains the law of the Kremlin. Inside fact is that the Defense And when United States propa-Department, not the State Degarda stirs the population of partment, made the decision to Czechoslovakia or Hungary to a put up the ransom money—for boiling point, the Kremlin is much more likely to act with

the United States and specially of the Defense Department.

2. The Joint Chiefs of Staff probed Army camps recently, shied away from any threat of they didn't seem to notice that, retaliation for fear Hungary they didn't seem to notice that, while Fort Belvoir, Va., has a decaded thousands of dollars. This latter point gets down to squandered thousands of dollars



crochety, almost took two more liam Oatis in order to turn off digs -at the reporters recently the heat. First, he wanted to lecture them However, when similar balloon stressed.

He also wanted to bawl them ment. able Joe Short, convinced Mr. Georges Dimitrov and Stalin.
Truman to forget about it. "Are you afraid of war?"

Inside Hungary

Final decision to pay the ran-som of the four United States fliers in Hungary was made only of propaganda steps that can be after significant back-stage de taken with no danger or war, bate which goes to the very root Furthermore, it remains a fact?

two reasons:

1. The four Air Force men reason. were official representatives of Military Playground the United States and specifical Military Playground

the root problem of whether it on fancy golf courses, it has let is wise to provoke the Soviet. It its living quarters run down has come up time after time in shamefully. the past, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff always shy away from, any showdown. In general, so does the State Department.